

West Virginia Capitol
1800 Washington St., East
Charleston
Kanawha County
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-217

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243



United States Department of the Interior
 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
 Washington, DC 20243

NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORD
 HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE West Virginia	COUNTY Kanawha	TOWN OR VICINITY Charleston
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) West Virginia Capitol		HABS NO. WV-217
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE State Capitol		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 1800 Washington Street, East, Charleston, Kanawha County, West Virginia		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1924-1925 (west wing), 1926-1927 (east wing), 1930-1932 (central building)	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Cass Gilbert, FAIA (1858-1934) & Cass Gilbert, Jr. Hitchcock & Seale, Temples of Democracy, pp. 221-222	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) The last in the long series of domed beaux-arts state capitols built in America, this late work of the distinguished architect Cass Gilbert, assisted by his son, is notable for its restrained neo-classical style and the majestic scale of its Renaissance dome. It equals the best of the state capitols in the quality of its materials and workmanship. Always used as capitol.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Beaux-arts neo-classical with Renaissance dome.		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Steel-framed structure clad in masonry fronted with Indiana select buff limestone.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) U-shaped layout composed of central building 120' x 558' to which wings about 300' x 60' are attached by one-story hyphens. Three stories above basement. Total height of dome is 292'.		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE The center of the north and south fronts have double octastyle Corinthian pedimented porticoes. The center is crowned by a large dome, its drum surrounded by a Corinthian annular colonnade and its bell ornamented by gilded trophies between gilded ribs. The cupola of the dome repeats the drum motif at smaller scale and terminates in a gilded spiral supporting an eagle. The office wings have distyle in antis central pavilions. The roofs are balustraded.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) The central rotunda, entered from the north and south porticoes, opens east and west to lobbies leading to the House of Representatives Chamber and the Senate Chamber respectively. The Governor's suite is at the west end of the ground floor. There is a ground-floor rotunda below the main one. The interior is notable for a lavish use of fine marbles and several immense crystal chandeliers.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES None		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Condition excellent. Used for legislative assemblies, court sessions, and government offices.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE Building was placed on National Register of Historic Places on December 31, 1974. The Capitol is reported to have 333 rooms and to contain 535,000 square feet of space. The cost was approximately \$10,000,000.		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDE LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form, prepared by James E. Harding. Hitchcock, Henry-Russell & William Seale, Temples of Democracy - The State Capitols of the USA New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich [1976], pp. 271-272. Writers' Program, Work projects Administration, West Virginia: A Guide to the Mountain State. New York, Oxford U. Press, 1941, pp. 190-194.		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Denys Peter Myers, Architectural Historian, Historic American Buildings Survey	DATE 03/12/81	

ADDEDUM TO:

WEST VIRGINIA CAPITOL

1800 Washington Street, East
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Kanawha County
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National Park Service
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